

ADVERTISING FEATURE

# Back To School

## Failing to stop for a school bus could result in a loss of six demerit points, a fine and a possible jail sentence



### ARE YOUR CHILD'S EYES READY FOR SCHOOL?

A good education for your child means good schools, good teachers and good vision. Your child's eyes are constantly in use in the classroom and at play. So when his or her vision is not functioning properly, learning and participation in recreational activities will suffer.

The basic vision skills needed for school use are:

- **Near vision:** The ability to see clearly and comfortably at 10-13 inches.
- **Distance vision:** The ability to see clearly and comfortably beyond arms reach.
- **Binocular coordination:** The ability to use both eyes together.
- **Eye movement skills:** The ability to aim the eyes accurately, move them smoothly across a page and shift them quickly and accurately from one object to another.
- **Focusing skills:** The ability to keep both eyes accurately focused at the proper distance to see clearly and to change focus quickly.
- **Peripheral awareness:** The ability to be aware of things located to the side while looking straight ahead.
- **Eye/hand coordination:** The ability to use the eyes and hands together.

If any of these or other vision skills is lacking or not functioning properly, your child will have to work harder. This can lead to headaches, fatigue and other eyestrain problems. As a parent, be alert for symptoms that may indicate your child has a vision or visual processing problem. Be sure to tell your optometrist if your child frequently:

- Loses their place while reading.
- Avoids close work.
- Holds reading material closer than normal.
- Tends to rub their eyes.
- Has headaches.
- Turns or tilts head to use one eye only.
- Makes frequent reversals when reading or writing.
- Uses finger to maintain place when reading.
- Omits or confuses small words when reading.
- Consistently performs below potential.



Since vision changes can occur without you or your child noticing them, your child should visit the optometrist at least every two years, or more frequently, if specific problems or risk factors exist. If needed, the doctor can prescribe treatment including eyeglasses, contact lenses or vision therapy.

Remember, a school vision or pediatrician's screening is not a substitute for a thorough eye examination.

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(NC) For many parents, their child's first trip without them is on a big yellow school bus, either for the daily trip to and from school, or on a field trip.

It is often difficult for parents to give up control and let a stranger take responsibility for their child's safety.

In Ontario, about 800,000 students use school buses every day. Studies have shown that travelling by school bus is 16 times safer than travelling in the family car.

While injuries and fatalities involving school buses are low, they do at times occur. These occurrences often take place outside the bus when children are getting on or off the bus or are crossing the street.

To avoid mishaps, adults and children should learn the correct procedures and proper behaviour in and around school buses.

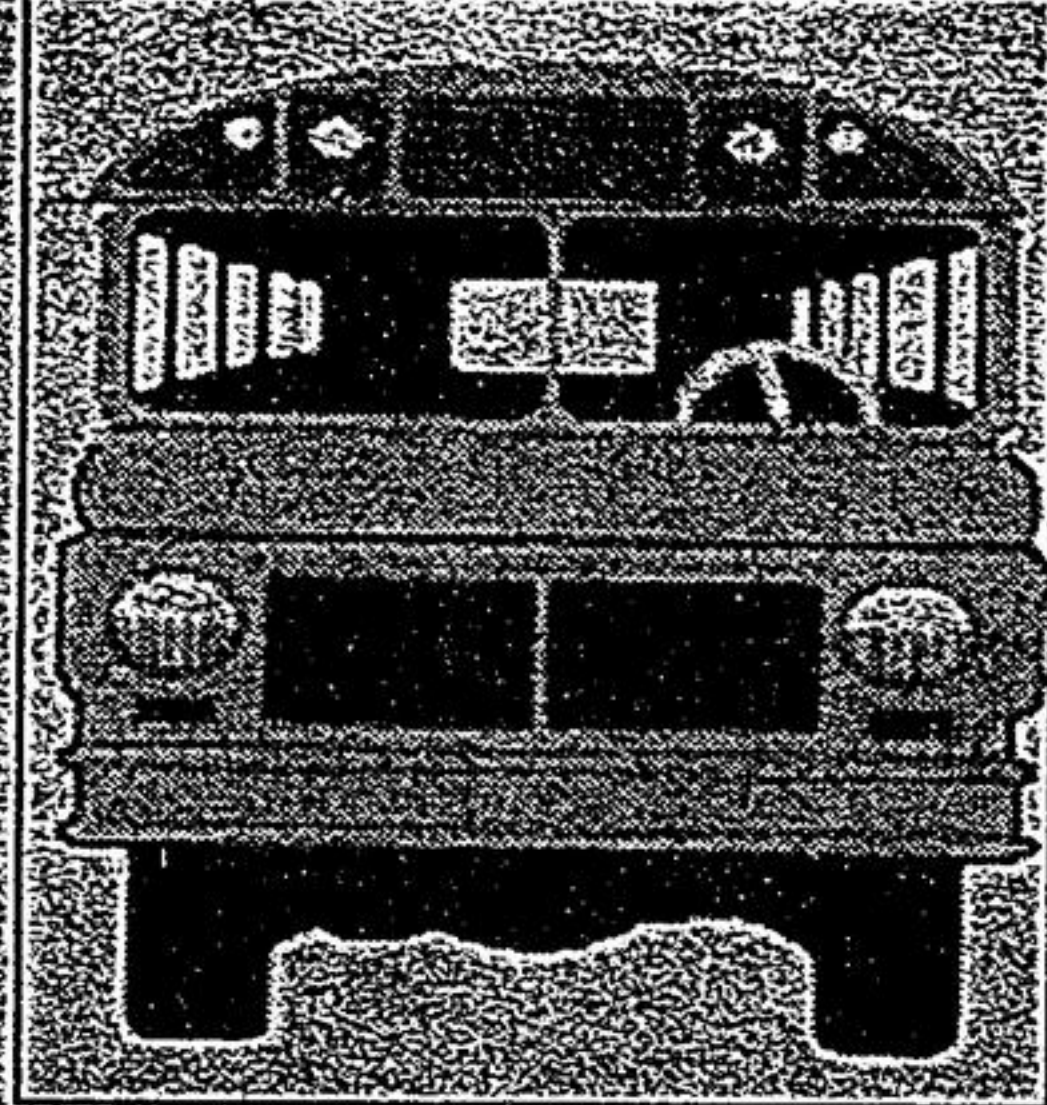
To get on the school bus, children should:

- be at the school bus stop on time
- wait in a safe place, well back from the road
- know the danger zones around the bus where the bus driver cannot see them

- get on the bus in single file, holding onto the handrail
- find a seat right away and remain seated
- face forward in their seat
- make sure there is nothing in the aisle
- obey and not distract the bus driver
- not throw things, eat, drink or be rowdy
- keep heads and arms inside the bus.

When leaving the bus, children should:

- realize that they are too close to the bus if they can touch it.



It's important to teach children proper bus safety rules.

• stay away from the road and not play on snowbanks.

• not pick up something they drop near the bus because they may be out of sight of the bus driver, ask for assistance from an adult.

Adults should meet children on the side of the road where the bus stops. If children must cross the road, they should:

• walk 10 big steps in front of the bus, make eye contact with the bus driver and wait for the bus driver to signal them to cross.

• look all ways before crossing the road.

As motorists, whether you are following or meeting a stopped school bus with lights flashing and the stop arm extended, remember you must stop.

Failure to stop could result in a substantial fine, a six demerit point penalty and a possible jail sentence.

## Shoot wrestling helps people develop self confidence

People have been enjoying the benefits of martial arts – and particularly karate – for thousands of years.

But now, people can try an art that is relatively new, said Ron Beer, owner of Ron Beer's Family Self Defense Centre in Markham.

"Shoot wrestling is a unique form of cross training that includes boxing, wrestling and the martial arts," said Beer.

Like many forms of the martial arts, shoot wrestling has numerous benefits including an increase in fitness level and self-awareness.

They also develop discipline, honour, respect and self confidence.

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